

In the Claims

Please amend the claims as follows:

1. (Currently Amended) A vehicle running board assembly comprising, in combination:

a structural frame having fore and aft edges and at least one connector adapted to connect the structural frame to a motor vehicle; [and]

a step pad comprising a step₁ and fore and aft legs extending from the step past the corresponding fore and aft edges of the structural frame, wherein the step pad is secured to the structural frame;

reinforcing ribs formed on an underside of the step pad remote from the connector;

wherein the structural frame has fore and aft flanges ending at the corresponding fore and aft edges, and the step pad further comprises walls formed on an underside of the step pad, forming a pocket which snugly receives fore and aft flanges of the structural frame.

2. (Original) The vehicle running board assembly of claim 1 wherein the step and the fore and aft legs of the step pad are formed of unitary construction.

3. (Cancelled) The vehicle running board assembly of claim 1 further comprising reinforcing ribs formed on an underside of the step pad.

4. (Currently Amended) The vehicle running board assembly of claim [3] 1 wherein the reinforcing ribs are on the fore and aft legs of the step pad.

5. (Original) The vehicle running board assembly of claim 1 further comprising an underside cover which cooperates with the step pad to enclose the structural frame.

6. (Cancelled) The vehicle running board assembly of claim 1 wherein the structural frame has fore and aft flanges ending at the corresponding fore and aft edges, and the step pad further comprises walls formed on an underside of the step pad, forming a pocket which snugly receives fore and aft flanges of the structural frame.

7. (Original) The vehicle running board assembly of claim 1 comprising fore and aft walls formed on an underside of the step pad, which extend past the corresponding fore and aft edges of the structural frame.

8. (Original) The vehicle running board assembly of claim 1 comprising fore and aft walls formed on an underside of the step pad which at least partially wrap around the corresponding fore and aft edges of the structural frame.

9. (Original) The vehicle running board assembly of claim 1 wherein the step pad is formed by injection molding molten plastic around the structural frame.

Please Cancel Claims 10-14 upon entry of this Amendment.